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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*In the Name of Allâh, the Most
Gracious, the Most Merciful*

Prophethood and Messengership

This universe was not created in vain it has a Creator, Who is Able to do all things and it is an obligation upon the created to worship the Creator, for He, the Most Glorified, the Most High has created us in order to worship Him, since He, the Most Sublime has said:

﴿وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ﴾

"And I (Allâh) created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me (Alone)."^[1]

It is Allâh's right to be worshipped in the way He wants to be worshipped so it is incumbent upon the created to know the Creator from what He has revealed, and what He has made obligatory upon them and how He is to be worshipped. This is why Allâh has chosen mankind from among His creation to impart to them this information about Him, about the

^[1] Surat Adh-Dhariyat 51:56.

required manner of worshipping Him and the reward for those who believe in it and obey it, and the punishment of those who disbelieve in it and disobey.

For that reason, the duty of the Messengers and Prophets may the blessings and peace of Allâh be upon them all was to inform the people about Allâh, the Most High and to impart His Revelation to them.

A Prophet (*Nabi*) is one who informs the people about what Allâh, the All-Mighty, the All-Powerful says, (and is known as such) because he imparts to them information from Him.^[1]

A Messenger (*Rasul*) is one who acts upon the information given to him by the One Who sent him, and the *Rasul* is so called because he possesses a Message (*Risalah*), or he bears a Message and he is charged with the responsibility of imparting it.

The Messenger has a wider and more general mission than that of the Prophet, for every Messenger is a Prophet, but not every Prophet is a Messenger. This means that Revelation came to the Prophet from Allâh, but he was not given a Message to give to his people from the Scriptures and Revealed Books. As for the Messenger, Revelation came to him from Allâh and he was commanded to convey the Book which was revealed to him.

^[1] Translator's note: That is, he is known as a *Nabi* from the Arabic verb *Anba'a*, which means to inform.

Al-Mu'jizah and Al-Karamah

Allâh knew that the Messengers would face denial from their peoples, caused by their fancies and whims as our beloved Prophet ﷺ was denied by the pagans because of their fancies, which included their fear that they would lose their power, leadership and prestige.

This is made clear by the words of Abu Jahl, which reveal his evil intentions, when Al-Akhnas bin Shuraiq asked his opinion regarding what he had heard from the Prophet ﷺ; he said: "What have I heard? We and Banu 'Abd Manaf competed for the honor of serving the pilgrims; they fed and we fed, they provided transport and we provided transport, they gave and we gave, until we were like two race horses, then they said: 'A Prophet has come from us to whom Revelation is given from the heaven.' How can we compete with this? By Allâh, we will not believe in him, nor will we believe what he says!"

It was envy toward Banu 'Abd Manaf that they should have been favored with this special status and their dispute as to who should have the leadership and the honor of serving the pilgrims and their desire to follow the religion of their ancestors and forefathers. This is revealed to us in the Words of Allâh, the Most-High:

﴿وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا ۖ أُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ يَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ السَّعِيرِ﴾

"And when it is said to them: 'Follow what Allâh has

sent down,' they say: 'Nay, we shall follow what we found our fathers (following).' (Would that do so) even if Satan invites them to the torment of the Fire?''^[1]

In order to prevent an impostor from claiming to be a Messenger, Allâh supported His Messengers with Miracles; He, the All-Mighty, the All-Powerful says:

﴿لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ
النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا الْحَدِيدَ فِيهِ بَأْسٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَنْفَعٌ لِلنَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ
اللَّهُ مَنْ يَنْصُرُهُ وَرُسُلَهُ بِالْغَيْبِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ﴾

"Indeed We have sent Our Messengers with clear proofs, and revealed with them the Scripture and the Balance (justice) that mankind may keep up justice. And We brought forth iron wherein is mighty power (in matters of war), as well as many benefits for mankind, that Allâh may test who it is that will help Him (His religion) and His Messengers in the unseen. Verily, Allâh is All-Strong, All-Mighty."^[2]

So what then is the difference between *Al-Mu'jizah* and *Al-Karamah*? Both of them are preternatural phenomena, in the sense that they are things impossible for any person to imitate.

Al-Karamah is something with which Allâh honors those whom He considers to be deserving of it, such as

^[1] Surat Luqman 31:21.

^[2] Surat Al-Hadid 57:25.

His true *Awliya'*, but it is not associated with a challenge to mankind (to produce the like of it).

As for *Al-Mu'jizah*, it is something that is only given to the Messengers and is associated with a challenge to mankind (to produce the like of it). That is, Allâh places them in the hands of the Messenger, in order to establish the evidence for the truth of his Message and in order to challenge thereby his people, if they belie him; and it is of the type of whatever skill the Messenger's people excel in.

For example, the people of Moses ﷺ excelled in the practice of magic so Allâh gave him the Great Signs of changing his hand to white without any disease, and the changing of his staff into a serpent.

As for Jesus ﷺ, his people were skilled in the practice of medicine and so Allâh supported him with the Miracles of curing the blind (from birth) and the leper and giving life to the dead by Allâh's Leave.

The Noble Qur'ân is the Miracle of Miracles

The people of Muhammad ﷺ were skilled more than any other people in eloquence, articulacy, wisdom and oratory and they were rightly described as warriors of words.

Truly, the Qur'ân will remain the greatest Miracle, because the warriors of words were unable to compete with it. It challenged them with the fine composition of its words, its articulacy, its eloquence, its succinctness,